



Rebuilding Afghanistan

Weekly Activity Update for June 24 to July 5
Issue 62

United States Agency for International Development

STRENGTHENING THE GOVERNMENT

Program Goals

- Support the Bonn process: the Constitutional, Human Rights and Judicial Commissions; the 2004 elections; and a free and independent media.
- Strengthen government budgeting, revenue generation (e.g., customs), monetary management, private-sector related legal and regulatory frameworks, and promote private enterprises.
- Build capacity to carry out other legitimate government functions and support reconstruction of health, judicial, education, economic, agricultural and transportation infrastructure.

Recent Progress:

- **President of Afghanistan Visits USAID Headquarters:** On June 14, during his trip to the US to address Congress and promote private sector investment in Afghanistan, President Hamid Karzai visited the USAID headquarters at the Ronald Reagan Building, and thanked the US government and USAID for its continued contributions toward the reconstruction of his country.
- **Groundbreaking for Government Buildings:** On June 6 and 7, The Jalalabad Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT)—a joint civil-military unit that improves security and facilitates reconstruction efforts in the region—celebrated the groundbreaking for two government buildings in the Kama and Gowshta districts of Nangarhar Province. These government buildings were selected, designed and funded by USAID. The construction of the Kama government building will allow the local district administrator to vacate a boy's primary school, and put it back to use as a school. The new government building in Gowshta will give this vital border district a formal seat for its government, as opposed to the thatched roof "lean-to" where it is currently working. Both buildings represent a larger USAID and international donor program to revitalize local governments throughout the country.
- **Children's Radio Program Receives Global Award:** A popular radio program Shahrak Atfal ("Children's City"), developed by Internews with funding from USAID, was honored with second place in the UNICEF/One World contest for best children's radio programming. Shahrak Atfal is set in an imagined city, which features an interactive radio, an invisible parrot and a flying carpet. Through the characters' adventures, the geography, history and current affairs of Afghanistan are presented in an engaging manner. At the same time, the program addresses issues of post-conflict psychology from a child's perspective. This Dari/Pashto bilingual program is played weekly by 36 stations across Afghanistan, and produced its 64th edition this week. It is so popular that in one town they are broadcasting a television version. "The children's programs are particularly popular with our listeners. We play every edition of Shahrak Atfal two or three times," says Noor Mohammed, the station manager at Samangan Radio, one of 17 independent radio stations established with support from USAID.



President Hamid Karzai shakes hands with USAID Afghanistan Desk Program Officer Nitin Madhav.



USAID PRT liaison John Schweiger (second from left) participates in the groundbreaking ceremony for two government buildings in Jalalabad.



Scene from the TV version of the Afghan program Shahrak Atfal.

REVITALIZING AGRICULTURE/CREATING JOBS

Program Goals

- Increased marketable output of \$250 million in agriculture
- More than 500,000 farm family beneficiaries
- A reliable source of water provided to more than 500,000 hectares of land through irrigation rehabilitation
- 1,000 km of improved village feeder roads rehabilitated
- Construction of over 100 village agricultural market centers

Recent Progress

USAID's Rebuilding Agricultural Markets Program (RAMP) is a three-year program aimed at enhancing the food security and incomes of Afghanistan's rural population. It has two principal objectives, to increase agricultural productivity and output, and to facilitate effective linkages between producers, processors and markets. The program's budget is \$150 million.

- **Former USAID Hydro-Electric Project Repaired:** In June, USAID completed repairs to the Fil Koh ("Elephant Mountain") chute, part of a hydro-electric project that was funded by the Agency before the Soviets occupied Afghanistan in the 1980s. The chute is located in Kandahar Province and provides irrigated water to approximately 35,000 hectares of agricultural land. Without the chute, the land would not be suitable for farming.



Before: Damaged Fil Koh chute—April 2004.



After: Repaired Fil Koh chute—June 2004.
